



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/708,059	02/06/2004	Long-Hui Lin	LKSP0032USA	2058
27765	7590	03/16/2005	EXAMINER	
NORTH AMERICA INTERNATIONAL PATENT OFFICE (NAIPC)			RAO, SHEELA S	
P.O. BOX 506			ART UNIT	
MERRIFIELD, VA 22116			PAPER NUMBER	
			2125	

DATE MAILED: 03/16/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/708,059

Applicant(s)

LIN ET AL.

Examiner

Sheela Rao

Art Unit

2125

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 February 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 06 February 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-12 are presented for examination and are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Steffan et al. in US Patent No. 6,512,842 B1.

The patented reference of prior art to Steffan et al. teaches of a method and apparatus for the analysis of defects in a semiconductor wafers. In doing so, a production lot of wafers are scanned and analyzed in an analysis tool, such as the SEM (scanning electron microscope), optical tools, or the FIB (fixed ion beam). The analyzed data is then stored in the defect management system, along with images of the wafers and assigned descriptors. Furthermore, a review station is present which assigns refined descriptive labels to the images and this data is saved in the database. In addition to the defect inspection process, the ADC (automatic defect classification) protocol is used for classifying the types of defects. As per the limitations of the instant claims, a manual inspection is also taught by the prior art of record. As stated in col. 4: ll.50-59, an operator is able to review the images at the review station and compare those reviewed to other images in the database. Upon having reviewed the retrieved images, the operator can revise the descriptors to refine the database.

For the reasons stated above, the limitations of the instant invention as claimed by instant claims 1-12 is taught by the prior arts of record; thereby, rendering the instant claims unpatentable.

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Art Unit: 2125

Applicant is advised to carefully review the cited art, as evidence of the state of the art, in preparation for responding to this Office action.

O'Dell et al.	USPN 6,826,298 B1	teaches of an automated wafer defect inspection system and process
Hsu et al.	USPN 6,643,006 B1	teaches a data management system for reviewing semiconductor wafers

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sheela Rao whose telephone number is (571) 272-3751. The examiner can normally be reached Monday - Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Leo Picard, can be reached on (571) 272-3749.

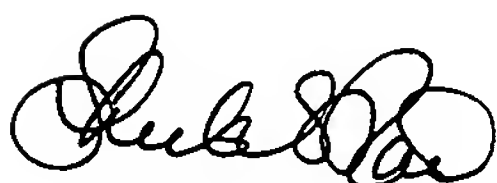
Any response to this action should be mailed to:

**Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231**

or faxed to:

(703) 305-3718 for Official Communications

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.


Sheela S. Rao
March 14, 2005



**LEO PICARD
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100**